

What is claimed is:

1. A pattern-unbonded nonwoven fabric, comprising:
a nonwoven web having a fibrous structure of individual fibers or filaments;
the nonwoven web having on a surface thereof a pattern of continuous
bonded areas defining a first plurality of discrete unbonded areas and a second
plurality of discrete unbonded areas;
the first plurality of discrete unbonded areas having a first characteristic; and
the second plurality of discrete unbonded areas having a second
characteristic different from the first characteristic.
2. The fabric of claim 1, wherein the individual fibers or filaments within the first
plurality of discrete unbonded areas having at least a portion thereof extending into
and bonded within the continuous bonded areas.
3. The fabric of claim 2, wherein the individual fibers or filaments within the
second plurality of discrete unbonded areas having at least a portion thereof
extending into and bonded within the continuous bonded areas.
4. The fabric of claim 3, wherein the nonwoven web having a percent bond area of
from about 25 percent to about 50 percent.
5. The fabric of claim 1, wherein the nonwoven web includes melt-spun filaments.
6. The fabric of claim 5, wherein said nonwoven web includes melt-spun filaments,
including multicomponent filaments.
7. The fabric of claim 4, wherein the nonwoven web includes staple fibers.
8. The fabric of claim 1, further comprising a film layer attached to a surface of the

nonwoven web opposite the surface having the pattern of continuous bonded areas defining the first plurality of discrete unbonded areas, and the second plurality of discrete unbonded areas.

5 9. The fabric of claim 1, further comprising a second nonwoven web having a fibrous structure of individual fibers or filaments, the second nonwoven web being laminated to the first nonwoven web.

10 10. The fabric of claim 1, wherein the first characteristic is a first opacity level, wherein the second characteristic is a second opacity level, the second opacity level is higher than the first opacity level.

15 11. The fabric of claim 1, wherein the first characteristic is a first tensile strength, wherein the second characteristic is a second tensile strength, the second tensile strength is greater than the first tensile strength.

12. The fabric of claim 11, wherein the second tensile strength is about twenty-two pounds.

20 13. The fabric of claim 11, wherein the first tensile strength is about thirteen pounds.

25 14. The fabric of claim 11, wherein the second tensile strength is about nine pounds greater than the first tensile strength.

15. The fabric of claim 1, wherein the first characteristic is a first stiffness, and wherein the second characteristic is a second stiffness.

30 16. The fabric of claim 15, wherein the first stiffness is greater than the second stiffness such that the nonwoven web in a region including the second plurality of

discrete unbonded areas more easily bends.

17. The fabric of claim 15, wherein the second stiffness is greater than the first stiffness.

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18. The fabric of claim 1, wherein the first characteristic is a first fluid flow, and wherein the second characteristic is a second fluid flow, the second fluid flow being different than the first fluid flow.

10 19. The fabric of claim 18, wherein the second fluid flow is greater than the first fluid flow.

20. The fabric of claim 18, wherein the second fluid flow is less than the first fluid flow.

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21. A pattern-unbonded non-woven web, comprising:
a first region including a first pattern of continuous bonded area that defines a first plurality of discrete unbonded areas;
at least one second region including a second pattern of continuous bonded area that defines a second plurality of discrete unbonded areas; and
wherein the second pattern is different than the first pattern.

22. The web of claim 21, wherein the first region is adapted to receive a hook-type fastener.

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23. The web of claim 21, wherein the at least one second region is adjacent the first region in a machine cross direction of the web.

24. The web of claim 21, wherein the at least one second region includes a transition region adjacent the first region, and wherein the transition region includes

a third pattern of continuous bonded area that defines a third plurality of discrete unbonded areas, the third pattern being a gradient from the first pattern to the second pattern.

5 25. The web of claim 21, wherein the first pattern creates a first characteristic; and the second pattern creates a second characteristic.

10 26. The web of claim 25, wherein the first characteristic is a first opacity level, wherein the second characteristic is a second opacity level, the second opacity level is higher than the first opacity level.

15 27. The web of claim 25, wherein the first characteristic is a first tensile strength, wherein the second characteristic is a second tensile strength, the second tensile strength is greater than the first tensile strength.

20 28. The web of claim 27, wherein the second tensile strength is about twenty-two pounds.

25 29. The web of claim 27, wherein the first tensile strength is about thirteen pounds.

30 30. The web of claim 27, wherein the second tensile strength is about nine pounds greater than the first tensile strength.

35 31. The web of claim 25, wherein the first characteristic is a first stiffness, and wherein the second characteristic is a second stiffness.

40 32. The web of claim 31, wherein the first stiffness is greater than the second stiffness such that the nonwoven web in a region including the second plurality of discrete unbonded areas more easily bends.

33. The web of claim 31, wherein the second stiffness is greater than the first stiffness.

34. The web of claim 25, wherein the first characteristic is a first fluid-flow, and wherein the second characteristic is a second fluid flow, the second fluid flow being different than the first fluid flow.

35. The fabric of claim 34, wherein the second fluid flow is greater than the first fluid flow.

36. The fabric of claim 34, wherein the second fluid flow is less than the first fluid flow.

37. A mechanical fastening system, comprising:
a male component;
a receiving area including a first region and a second region, the first region including a first pattern of discrete unbonded area that form a female component adapted for releasable engagement with the male component, the second region having a second pattern of discrete, unbonded areas that are different than the first pattern.

38. A disposable absorbent article comprising the pattern-unbonded nonwoven fabric of claim 1.

39. A disposable absorbent article, comprising:
a bodyside liner;
an outer cover;
an absorbent structure disposed between the liner and the outer cover;
a mechanical fastening tab joined to the article, the fastening tab including a male component; and

Sub A12
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a female component joined to the outer cover and adapted for releasable engagement with the male component;
female component comprising the pattern-unbonded nonwoven fabric of claim 1.

10 40. A process for forming a pattern-unbonded nonwoven fabric, comprising:
forming a first nonwoven web having a fibrous structure of individual fibers or filaments;
feeding the nonwoven web into a nip defined between oppositely positioned first and second rolls, at least the first roll having a patterned outer surface;
rotating the first and second rolls in opposite directions;
15 bonding the nonwoven web by application of heat and pressure to form on a surface thereof a pattern of continuous bonded areas defining a first plurality of discrete unbonded areas and a second plurality of discrete unbonded areas, the first plurality of discrete unbonded areas provide a characteristic that differs from the second plurality of discrete unbonded areas.

20 41. The process of claim 40, further comprising feeding the nonwoven web into the nip defined between the first and second rolls, wherein the first and second rolls have patterned outer surfaces, and bonding the nonwoven web by application of heat and pressure to form on at least two surfaces the first and second patterns.

25 42. The process of claim 40, further comprising:
forming a second nonwoven web having a fibrous structure of individual fibers or filaments;
feeding the first and second nonwoven webs into the nip; and
30 bonding the first and second nonwoven web together to form a pattern-unbonded nonwoven laminate.

Sub A13

43. A disposable absorbent article, comprising:
an article chassis having a side edge;

a pattern-unbonded material on the article chassis, the pattern-unbonded material including a first region and at least one second region, the first region including a first pattern defining a first plurality of discrete unbonded areas, the second region including a second pattern defining a second plurality of discrete unbonded areas;
wherein at least a portion of the second region extends beyond the side edge.

10 44. The article of claim 43, wherein the second region is cantilevered to the first region.

112 45. The article of claim 43, wherein the first region is adapted to receive a hook-
15 type fastener to close the article about a wearer.

46. The article of claim 43, wherein the at least one second region is adjacent the first region in a machine cross direction of the material.

20 47. The article of claim 43, wherein the at least one second region includes a transition region adjacent the first region, and wherein the transition region includes a third pattern of continuous bonded area that defines a third plurality of discrete unbonded areas, the third pattern being a gradient from the first pattern to the second pattern.

25 48. The article of claim 43, wherein the first pattern creates a first characteristic; and the second pattern creates a second characteristic.

30 49. The article of claim 48, wherein the first characteristic is a first opacity level, wherein the second characteristic is a second opacity level, the second opacity level is higher than the first opacity level.

Sub A14
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50. The article of claim 48, wherein the first characteristic is a first tensile strength, wherein the second characteristic is a second tensile strength, the second tensile strength is greater than the first tensile strength.

5 51. The article of claim 50, wherein the second tensile strength is about twenty-two pounds.

52. The article of claim 50, wherein the first tensile strength is about thirteen pounds.

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53. The article of claim 50, wherein the second tensile strength is about nine pounds greater than the first tensile strength.

Sub A15

54. The article of claim 48, wherein the first characteristic is a first stiffness, and wherein the second characteristic is a second stiffness.

55. The article of claim 54, wherein the first stiffness is greater than the second stiffness such that the nonwoven web in a region including the second plurality of discrete unbonded areas more easily bends.

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56. The article of claim 54, wherein the second stiffness is greater than the first stiffness.

Sub A16

57. The article of claim 48, wherein the first characteristic is a first fluid flow, and wherein the second characteristic is a second fluid flow, the second fluid flow being different than the first fluid flow.

58. The fabric of claim 57, wherein the second fluid flow is greater than the first fluid flow.

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59. The fabric of claim 57, wherein the second fluid flow is less than the first fluid flow.

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